

21/12/22
A
DISSWASIVE
FROM THE
SIN
OF
Drunkenness.

By a Minister of the
CHURCH of ENGLAND.
[Josiah Woodward]

L O N D O N :

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DISSEMINATIVE

FROM THE

21

OF



By a Minute of the
CHURCH of ENGLAND.

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A

DISSWASIVE

FROM THE

Sin of Drunkenness.

THE Vice of *Intemperance* is such an Enemy to all that is *Virtuous* and *Religious* in *Man*, yea, to all that is *Decent* and *Man-like*, that all Mankind ought to rise up with Indignation against it, as a Thing that degrades them from the Honour of Humane Nature, and renders them more Vile than the very Beasts.

The poor senseless Brutes may by Accident be overcome with strong Liquors, because they have no Reason to govern their Appetites, no Sense of Duty or Shame, no Foresight of Danger, nor fear of a future Judgment: And when the *Dog* turns to his *Vomit*, or the *Swine* wallows in the *Mire*, they

do but act according to their Nature. But for the noble Creature *MAN*, that is made after the Image of God, and rank'd in Dignity next to the glorious Angels; *Man*, that has Reason to inform him in the Will of his Creator, and a Conscience to awaken his Care to comply with it; yea, for a *Christian*, that has the Vows of God upon him, and stands fair for an eternal Kingdom; I say, for this wise and noble Creature to part with his Reason, his Conscience, his Heaven, his God, for a little Drink more than he needs, yea, for such an Excess of it as tends to his present Pain, Disorder and Shame, as well as to eternal Torment, is a most desperate Pitch of Sin and Folly, such as all People, when in their Senses, cannot choose but condemn even with Passion; and every Body must grant, that no Kindness in the World can be more seasonable or more valuable than that which tends to lift Men out of the Mire of this noisome Sin, and to bring them to the sweet and honourable Estate of *Christian Sobriety*.

And this is the Work of our blessed Religion, according to that Exhortation of the holy Scriptures, (*Eph. v. 18.*) *Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess;*

cess; but be filled with the Spirit. As if it were said, know your divine Advantages, ye that live in the State of the Gospel, and be not as Swine, which trample the Richest Pearls under their Feet. Ye who now Rave and Blaspheme by reason of *Excess of Wine*, may, by a due Use of the means of Grace, come to be filled with the *Holy Spirit*, and to be happy in the Service and Favour of God, like holy Angels. Wherefore consider the infinite Value of your heavenly Birthright, and do not sell it, with *Eſau*, for a few *sensual Draughts*, lest, with him, when you come to see the Folly of it, ye weep bitterly, and perhaps eternally.

It is the Misery of fall'n Man, that his Soul is sunk into the Flesh, and is prone to follow carnal Inclinations, yea, to make Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof; which is both in Nature and Religion as absurd and horrible as for a Prince to wait on his Slave, or for a Man to be trampled under the Feet of his Horse. Now, 'tis the Work of Reason, Religion, and the Grace of God, to amend this Disorder, by reducing the lower Faculties of the Soul into a just Obedience to the superior, and making both of them subject and obedient to the Will and Glory of God. And whereas

Sensual Pleasures are the usual Baits whereby Men are ensnared to *Intemperance*, and as it were bewitch'd to it thro' the Inordinacy and Folly of their *fleshly Minds*, it is absolutely necessary to Salvation, that, thro' the powerful Assistance of the holy Spirit of God, in the due observance of the Gospel Rules of *Temperance*, *Abstinence*, and *Mortification*, our Bodies should be kept in such Order and Regulation, that they may be fit Instruments of our Souls in our Endeavours to serve and glorify God. And herein consists the Virtue and Grace of *Sobriety*, namely, in prescribing just Bounds to *sensual Pleasures*; that we be not drawn to excess in Eating, Drinking, or other natural Actions, thro' the Enticement of those agreeable Pleasures that attend them.

As to the particular Case before us, that of *Drinking to excess*; it hath pleased God to make many sorts of Liquors gustful and pleasant to our Taste, that we might thereby be induced to acknowledge the Goodness of God, who gives us of his good Creatures, as well for our Delight, as for our Necessity. But here our *Sobriety* must stand on its guard, to see that we keep to the Rules of *Moderation*, and be not drawn to *Ex-*
cess

cess by the *Humour* of the *Company*, or the *Pleasantness* of the *Liquor*.

Our bountiful *Creator* has provided many sorts of *Wines*, and other generous *Liquors*, for the *Entertainment* of Men, to be *Cordials* to us under the *Indispositions* of our frail *Bodies*, and an *Antidote* to the over-heavy *Afflictions* which may befall us, (*Psal. civ. 15. Prov. xxxi. 6.*) In these Cases, *Wine* and such like *spirituous Liquors* are of excellent *Use* to the *Conveniency* of *Humane Life*. And a *Christian* is in this respect more kindly dealt with than the *Rechabite* or *Mahometan*. But here's the *Misery*: What *God* has bountifully given us for good *Ends*, sensual Men abuse to base and pernicious purposes. What *God* gives us for *Cheerfulness*, Men abuse to *Drunkenness* and *Excess*; and then our *Cordial* is turned into *Poison*, and our *Wine* into the *Gall* of *Asps*: For where *Drunkenness* prevails, all *Virtue* must needs decay, and all *Vice* is in a way to thrive.

It is through the *Breaches* which this *Sin* hath made, that a great part of that *Flood* of *Sin*, which all sober People complain of, has broken in upon us. And till this *Vice* ceases to be *modish* and *common*, yea, till it be duly exposed

and suppressed, by the just Execution of the Laws made for that purpose, all other Expedients of a *Reformation of Manners* will very much fail of their Design. And since such a *Reformation* would be the greatest Blessing that can come upon us, it will behove all wise and virtuous Persons to bring such Offenders to the Correction of the Magistrate as will not otherwise be reclaimed.

This *Vice* does a Person so much Damage, both as a *Man* and as a *Christian*, that where there is any degree of *Sense*, *Reason*, or *Conscience* left, it must needs make some Impression upon him, to consider the Mischiefs which attend it.

But because all Motives and Endeavours to repress this, or any other *Vice*, will be in vain, without the Blessing and Efficacy of the *Spirit of Holiness*, I beseech the God of all Grace to accompany the following Considerations with his *Holy Spirit*, that they may become mighty thro' his Grace, to silence the Excuses and mortifie the Inclinations of Men to this *Vice*, and to raise in all that read them a most vehement and lasting Indignation against it. In order to which, I shall in the first Place consider the Mischiefs it does us, as Men.

Secondly, The Mischiefs it does us, as
Christians. I. It

I. It injures us as we are *Men*, by depriving us of the Use of *Reason*, which is the Excellency and the very Distinction of Men from Brutes. The *wisest Person* under the Disorder of Drink becomes a *Fool*, and commits a thousand Vanities and Indiscretions. The *Drunkard* has not the Speech, the Carriage, nor the Civility of a Man; but is wild, disorderly, and extravagant.

Man, as he is rational and wise, bears the Image of God; but Intemperance blots out that divine Resemblance; in so much that the most despicable Creature, even a *Dog*, a *Toad*, a *Serpent*, bears more of the Image of God than a *drunken Man* or *Woman*. For these Creatures, tho' mean, are what God made them; but a Person overcome with *Drink*, is altogether unlike to, and more contemptible than even the meanest Creature of God's making. He has turned *his Glory into the similitude of the Ox that eateth Grass*, or rather, of the *Swine that wallows in the Mire*. 'Tis usually said of a Person in *Drink*, that he is not himself; and 'tis true, for he does not act by the humane Principles of *Reason* or *Conscience*; but rather by the *sordid Appetites* of a shameless Beast, or the *raging Fury* of one that's possess'd by the Devil: So

that he's no longer fit for Humane Conversation, but is a meer Nuisance and Disturbance to all that are about him; the Grief of some, and the Laughter of others. And the best that can be done for him is, to lay him somewhere out of the Way, till Time and Sleep have recovered his lost Senses. And then surely, when his Understanding returns to him, (as to *Nebuchadnezzar*) it will be as an Arrow to his Breast, to think what a Beast he has been, and how many *shameful Pranks* he has plaid.

And 'tis not only for the present that this *Vice* disorders the Understanding, but the Custom and Habit of it many times utterly besots Men, and makes them *Children in Understanding* even to their Death. Where Sensuality is accustomed to domineer over Reason, it will at last establish its Authority, and the Beast will exercise Dominion over the Man: Which leads us to a *second Consideration*.

II. This Vice makes People *Vile* and *Contemptible* in the sight of all Men. Even their Servants and Inferiors deride and condemn them, and the very Boys in the Streets make their Sports with them. Their ridiculous Behaviour moves the Laughter of vain People; whilst

whilst others, who consider the Matter better, cannot but mourn over the poor besotted Creature, and are ashamed that he should be thought their Friend, or their Acquaintance. And indeed what Sight can be sadder, than to see one, that is made capable of *Communion* with God, rendred unfit for *Society* with Men; and to see a Man selling the Honour and Dignity of his Nature, and his Hope of Eternal Bliss, for the Pleasure of a little Liquor, whilst it is running over his Tongue. By this many Persons of *Character* and *Distinction* do make themselves *Vile* and *Mean*, and they lose the respect which would otherwise be due unto them.

III. The *Vice* of *Intemperance* enflames Mens bestial *Lusts* and *Passions*, and lays their *Reason* asleep, which ought to guard them. And then there will be much the same Disorder as when wild Beasts have slain their *Keeper*, and are got loose. For indeed the Case is much the same where unmortified *Lusts* and *Passions* are heightened by strong Liquors, and no *Reason* nor *Conscience* is left to curb and control them. Hence comes Impudence and Shamelessness in the most unseemly Sins; like *fed Horses*, they proclaim the Impurity of their
Hearts

Hearts and the fury of their Lusts in the very Streets, as well as when they *assemble by Troops in the Houses of Harlots*, (Jer. v. 7.) Even so good a Man as *Lor*, when overcome with Wine, had utterly lost all Regard to Decency and Honour; and in this Disorder, even *Noah* himself behaved himself *unseemly*.

IV. It exposes Persons to causeless *Broils* and *Quarrels*. Many People fall out in their *Cups* they know not why nor how; insomuch that the *wise Man* would have it taken Notice of as a thing common to a *Proverb*, that he that sits long, *till Wine inflame him* and his Companions, is like to *have Wounds without Cause*, (Prov. xxiii. 20.) When the Spirits of Men are fired by immoderate Drinking, they soon blaze out into a Passion at the least Affront, tho' but an imaginary one; and then the Blood of the Party is often shed to quench it. How many *Murthers* have been committed at *Taverns*, within a few Years? And how great will the Cry be for *Vengeance*, where two such Sins as *Drunkenness* and *Murther* call at once to Heaven for Justice? How often have Men kill'd their nearest Relations or dearest Friends in their *Drink*, for which they have been ready to kill themselves when they

they come to reflect upon it in their sober Thoughts. It was in such a Debauch as this that *Alexander* kill'd *Clitus*, one of the dearest and faithfulest Friends he had; and that for doing one of the kindest Offices of *Friendship*, that is, *Reproving*.

V. In the next Place, it creates divers kinds of *Diseases*, and makes this present Life both short and painful. For excessive Drinking brings *Surfeits*, *Fevers*, *Dropsies*, *Palsies*, an *aching Head*, an *ill Stomach*, and what not? Some indeed, that are of a strong Constitution, may bear up longer than others under the Disorder it brings to their Bodies; but to all it is Poison, tho' it works more slowly upon some than others, and it fails not in the End to bring down their Heads with *Sorrow to the Grave*.

It has long been observ'd, and it is alas! too manifest, that if the *Sword* has slain its *Thousands*, *Intemperance* has slain its *Ten Thousands*: And in many of those, who make a shift to outlive the common Practice of it, we see such manifest *Decays* of their *Strength*, *Vigour*, *Wit*, and *Sense*, that God seems to hang them up *alive in Chains*, to *afright* others from such ill Courses. The good God perswade all that are con-

concern'd to take Warning thereby.

VI. A Person in the Disorder of *Drink* is unable to shun the most apparent *Dangers*. His Eyes are bemisted, that he cannot discern the Danger of a Pit or Precipice that lies before him, nor know his Friend from his Enemy. How many have fallen from their Horses, or tumbled into Pits, or fallen into Ponds, or been burnt in their Beds, in a Fit of *Intemperance*? Yea, their own Weakness seems to threaten their Life; they reel and stagger like an Infant; they stumble at every Stone that lies in their Way, and are ready to fall to their Ruine. And if by these or any such Accidents they come by their Death, in what a woful Condition must they appear before God, having died in the very Act of abusing his Mercies, and transgressing his Will?

VII. It begets in them a Contempt of Sobriety and sober Persons. The *Psalmist* complains, that he was the *Song of the Drunkards*, (Psal. lxxix. 12.) When *Nabal* was in his Wine, he rail'd upon *David*, the *Avointed* of God, as if he were a *Runaway* from his Master, (1 Sam. xxv. 10.)

I might add, that it causes People to be imposed upon in their Dealings, and ren-

renders them a Prey to every designing Cheat. It makes them unfit for any *Trust*, and for any publick Office in *Council* or *War*. It also blasts their Reputation and Esteem in the World; for there's scarce any Name more infamous than that of a *Sot*, or a common *Drunkard*.

And after all, 'tis a very wasteful Vice; it is never maintain'd but by unnecessary Expence, great waste of Time, and Neglect of Business. How many starve the Backs and Bellies of their Families, to maintain this expensive Vice? insomuch that *Solomon* makes it a Proverb, that the *Drunkard* and the *Glutton* shall come to Poverty, (Prov. xxiii. 21.)

Thus we see some of the Mischiefs of this Vice to us as Men: But alas! the one Half of its Damages is not yet cast up; for if we look on this Sin, with the enlightened Eyes of a *Christian*, we shall see far greater Mischiefs done by it. For,

1. It drives away the *Holy Spirit* of God. This is taught us by the Apostle in the Scripture before mentioned, (Eph. v. 18.) *Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess; but be fill'd with the Spirit.* Where the disjunctive Particle [*but*] shews

shews us that we cannot enjoy both together. Our *Excess* will drive away our *Sanctifier* and *Comforter*. He is too delicate to dwell with the nasty spewing Drunkard. For what *Communion* hath *Light* with *Darkness*? or *Christ* with *Belial*? (2 Cor. vi. 15.) Surely if any deserve the Name of Sons of *Belial*, (that is, Men without Yoke, Restraint, or Government) these are the Persons; for they are the most rude and ungovernable of all others. And besides,

2. This *Vice* unfits us for every spiritual and religious Action. The poor befotted Wretch cannot so much as think one sober Thought, or receive any good by the pious Advice of others. What Order can there be in that Family, where the Master of it is Drunk? Is such a one fit to Pray with his Family, or to instruct them in the Duties of Religion? May he not tremble to touch any holy Thing in such a polluted Condition? Has he not Reason to dread the Vengeance of a Holy God upon such a disorderly Approach to Him? *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Priests, the Sons of *Aaron*, are supposed to have drank too much when they offered *Strange Fire* before the Lord; because it is immediately added, (Lev. x. 9, 10.) That nei-
ther

ther Aaron nor his Sons should drink any Wine nor strong Drink, when they went into the Tabernacle, lest they die for it. It was always held as an Abomination to carry Swines Flesh into the Temple; which seems to teach us, that all Persons of impure and ungovern'd Appetites, are utterly unfit for Communion with the Holy God.

3. This Vice does very sadly waste the Conscience. It is of a dulling, besotting Nature: It drowns all serious Thought and Reflection where it grows to a Habit: How many have gone out at this Door into all Exorbitancies and Debauchery? It often betrays Men to prophane Swearing, Lying, Passion, filthy Language and Actions, and to any ill. He is (as Solomon says) like one that lieth on the top of a Mast, in which Case he cannot stir, without endangering his Life, (Prov. xxiii. 34.) so a Person that is Drunk, will be like to do every thing amiss that he sets himself to, and to be overcome by every Temptation that lies in his Way.

4. Intemperance pulls down dreadful Wrath upon the Person that is guilty of it, in this Life, and that to come, The Book of God is so full of Woes against it, that they appear like a Multitude

rude of Spears set in array against the
 Person that treads in this forbidden
 Path. *Wo to the Crown of Pride, the
 Drunkards of Ephraim, (Isa. xxviii. 1.)
 Wo unto them that rise up early in the
 Morning that they may follow strong Drink,
 that continue until Night, till Wine inflame
 them, (Isa. v. 11.) Wo unto him that giv-
 eth his Neighbour Drink, that putteth thy
 Bottle to him, and makest him drunken
 also, that thou mayest see his Nakedness.
 Thou art fill'd with Shame for Glory; the
 Cup of the Lord's Right Hand shall be turn-
 ed unto thee, and shameful Spewing shall be
 on thy Glory, (Hab. ii. 15.) No Drunkard
 shall inherit the Kingdom of God, (1 Cor.
 vi. 10.) Surely where there is not per-
 fect Infidelity, these Terrors of the Lord
 will in Some Measure over-awe Men.
 For 'tis very dismal to consider thro'
 what crooked and uneasy Paths they
 pass on to the Place of Everlasting
 Torment; where their Mouths will
 probably be parch'd with greater Heat
 than others, in proportion to their for-
 mer Excesses, and they will for ever
 want a Drop of cold Water to cool their
 Tongues. And then, 'twill be but little
 Comfort to think of the Bottles and Bar-
 rels that they have drank in waste in
 their former Life; yea, that very
 Thought*

Thought will for ever give Fewel to their Flames.

Let such as are *strong to drink Wine*, or *strong Drink*, consider this; and such as *entice* or *compel* others to drink more than is fit. 'Tis so natural to leave every one to his Liberty in this Point, that a Heathen Emperor provided for it by a Law, (*Esth. i. 8.*) *The Drinking* (at a most generous Entertainment) *was according to the Law; none did compel.*

These Things being consider'd, we even beseech Men, by all that is dear to them in both Worlds, to disdain a base *Vice*, which adds so much to their present *Reproach* and *Damage*, and to their eternal *Torment* and *Confusion*.

We perswade you by the Love ye bear your selves, *my Brethren*, as ye desire the Continuance of your present *Life* and *Health*; as you regard the Honour of *Humane Nature*, or tender your *Reputation*, that you abhor a *Vice*, which destroys all these Enjoyments.

Yea, we entreat you by that which ought to be dearer to you than your Lives, even by the Love and Fear of the great and good God, as you value his Favour, and would not fall under his everlasting Vengeance, that you would instantly discard this destructive

Vice,

Vice, and that you would *watch* and be *sober*.

Come out of the senseless Amusements of this besotting Sin, my Brother ; shun the Company, the Drink, and the Occasion which leads you into this Snare, and thereby into the bottomless Pit. Look up to Heaven, I beseech you, before it be utterly lost ; frequent the Company of good and sober People, and entreat them to watch over you, and to admonish you in the Lord ; and above all, beg the gracious Conduct of God's *Holy Spirit*, by earnest and continual Prayer ; and be sure to frequent all God's Holy Ordinances, and to improve all good Motions put into your Heart from above. And think often upon the Mischiefs of this Sin in both Worlds, with an awakened Expectation of a Judgment to come.

But if our most affectionate *Persuases* take no Place upon you, we must then, in pure Affection to you, try the Power of other Restraints ; as we deal with our best Friends when they are bereav'd of the Use of their Reason. And we cannot but entreat all sober Persons, as they would do you Good, or do Honour to God, that they would put you to Shame before the *Magistrate*,
to.

to restrain you from destroying your self, and pulling down *Calamities* and *Judgments* upon the Publick. If you saw a Person, in a furious or drunken Fit, casting Firebrands upon all the Houses he came near, you would think all those People worthy of great Blame that did not lay hold on him, and bring him to Justice. And in very Truth, every *scandalous Transgressor* does greater Mischief to his Neighbourhood; for by reason of these Things, where they abound without Controul, the righteous *Judgments* of God come upon a Land, till it be made a Reproach and a Desolation.

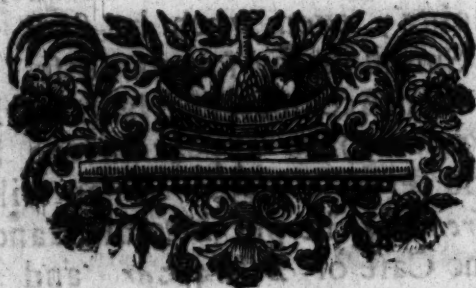
Upon the whole. If no *Entreaty* nor *Affliction* upon Earth will reclaim this excessive Lover of his Drink, a very short Time will convince him of the Unreasonableness and sad Consequence of so doing; even when he shall receive a Summons by some Disease, or some sudden Accident, (perhaps of his own procuring) to appear before his great and terrible Judge: Then will a *Cup of Trembling* be put into his Hands, as in the Case of *Belshazzar*, and he must drink of the Cup of God's Wrath for ever. Then will the most besotted Wretch begin to think soberly
both

both of *Vice* and *Virtue*; and cry out
of the Folly of pleasing himself in that
fottish Way of Life, which first robb'd
him of his *Reason*, then of his *Consci-*
ence, then of his *God*, and then of his
Heaven.

The prudent Man foreseeth the Evil,
and hideth himself; but the Simple pass
on and are punished, (Prov. xxii. 3.)

F I N I S.

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